



*Edited remarks of Secretary of Defense
William J. Perry at the Public Service
Recognition Week Ceremony,
Pentagon, May 4, 1994.*

I'm really delighted at this opportunity to do something that I like to do and that I feel deeply about, which is thanking the people in this department for the work that they do day in and day out to make this the most effective Defense Department, the most effective military in the world. You are living proof that public service attracts some of the best that America has to offer, and I, for one, deeply appreciate it.

Public Service Recognition Week is a chance for America — not just myself, not just the department's management here but for America — to recognize what you really do. What you do is help manage the most successful country in the world. It's also a chance for you to recognize this fact and to take pride in it.

It's an occasion to remember that no matter what your job description — whether it's crunching numbers or flying F-16s — public service is the world's most honorable profession, and it is your profession. Every day you come to work you are coming *pro bono publico* — for the good of the public.

We know that public service sometimes requires great sacrifices. Indeed, sometimes the sacrifices can be tragic. The terrible accident we had in Iraq last month illustrates this all too vividly. The 26 men and women who lost their lives were brave and generous individuals. They were carrying out a vitally important mission under very hazardous conditions. They were over there to provide comfort to a besieged people. That was the name of the operation, and it was a

fitting name for what they were doing.

This operation has delivered millions of pounds of relief supplies to the Kurdish people, escorted them home from exile and protected them from attack from a tyrant. This truly was, and is, a noble effort. It's the ultimate in public service.

Those who died gave their lives so that others might live. This is the greatest work that God can have us do.

Some were members of our family, and their death is our loss. Bear in mind, however, what the mother of one of those who died that day said. She said, "People are always wondering, 'Where are our role models?' Well, here they are." Here they are.

Their loss, our loss, reminds us that the post-Cold War world is not a risk-free world.

Meeting the Challenge

As the secretary of defense, it is my job to ensure that America is prepared to face these risks and that our forces can meet the security challenges of this new era.

As I tackle this job, I have, broadly speaking, three major objectives. I want to share those with you today very briefly.

The first is to prevent a drift back to the Cold War. I have spent my entire adult life under a nuclear cloud that threatened the total extinction of an entire society. With the end of the Cold War, that cloud is drifting away, and we have a responsibility to see that it does not drift back.

The best way to do this, I

believe, is by nailing down and securing some of the gains that we've already made with the end of the superpower nuclear standoff. We are working vigorously to help the Russians dismantle their nuclear arsenal. Just last month I spent an exhilarating day in Pervomaysk, which is an operational ICBM site, formerly of the Soviet Union, now in Ukraine. While there, the Ukrainians took us to the operational SS-24 silos and opened one of them. We looked down. There was a missile still sitting there, but the warheads were gone. They were gone because the week before they had been shipped back to a dismantlement site. As of today the Ukrainians have already removed about 300 of these warheads for dismantlement from missiles which just two months ago were pointed at the United States.

This is defense by other means. This is what I mean when I say we are taking actions to nail down the gains we've made with the ending of the Cold War.

No matter what the outcome of the turmoil and change in Russia, all of these efforts will move us to a world that is safer and more secure.

A second objective is to formulate a new approach, a new philosophy, of how American military power should be used in the post-Cold War era. The security problems we're facing today are very, very different from the ones we faced during the Cold War. We are confronted with regional conflicts. We're confronted with civil wars. We're confronted with a need for peacekeeping operations. Underlying all of this is the turmoil that's

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going on in the world today.

Daniel Patrick Moynihan made a truly prescient comment some years ago. He looked at what was going on in the world, the turmoil and the changes, and he said, "Ethnicity is the great hidden force of our age." When he said that, it was true. Today I would modify it in only one way. That is, that force is no longer hidden. It's out for the whole world to see. In Somalia, in Bosnia, in Rwanda, we've seen ethnicity driving forces that are causing tragic results.

We have a major challenge ahead of us, as we struggle to learn how to use the political will and the military force of the United States to deal constructively with these problems in the world.

I'd like to move to my third objective and spend perhaps a little more time on it, because it involves each of you in one way or another. That objective is to ensure that we draw down our Cold War force structure properly.

We will have a resource reduction from the mid-'80s to the mid-'90s of about 40 percent. This presents a major challenge to the management of this building, which under my definition of management includes everybody who's sitting in this audience.

Historically we have not managed drawdowns well. In fact, we've managed them very poorly indeed. After the Second World War we went through an even larger drawdown than today. And we went from having the greatest military force in the world in 1945 to a military force which, when confronted with North Korean forces in 1950, almost got thrown off the Korean peninsula.

After the Vietnam War we had another drawdown, which in fact was comparable to the size of the one we're going through right now. Five years after that drawdown Gen. [Edward] "Shy" Meyer, the

Army chief of staff, proclaimed that we had a "hollow Army." And he was right. What we did after Vietnam was decide to hold our force structure constant and take the reductions out of modernization and readiness. The results were entirely predictable and entirely disastrous.

This time we've got to get it right.

After the Vietnam War the readiness, the professionalism and the morale of our fighting forces were at an all-time low. But the young NCOs and the young officers who were in the service at the time and who decided to stay vowed to rebuild it. And after 15 years of hard, dedicated work they have succeeded. They are now the senior NCOs and the flag officers in the most capable, most professional military force in the world today.

Legacy to Protect

This is the legacy that we here at the Pentagon have inherited, and we must not squander it. The department's civilian employees have a key role in protecting this legacy. Our job, at its very heart, is to support the men and the women who volunteer to defend this nation. It is our job to ensure this nation has the best-trained, the best-equipped and the most effective forces in the world.

To do this with reduced resources we must bring down the size of the force. Of course we have been in the process of doing that for the past five years. We do not want to have a large, but hollow force.

We have committed then, as we bring this force down in size, to maintain readiness and effectiveness. This way, whatever our force size, person for person, unit for unit, it's the most effective force in the world.

These reductions in force structure, by the way, are nearly over. We have another year or two, depending on the service, and they

will be completed. Then we can have the advantage of the stability of a constant force structure as we build from that point on. In the meantime it is a major challenge to make sure that we maintain the readiness of these forces.

I watch and review all of the various readiness indicators that the services monitor. When I go out in the field, I talk with the units and individual soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines to get their judgments on readiness. On balance, I come away with a very good feeling, a very warm feeling, about the effectiveness and the readiness of our forces.

My concern is not readiness today, however, but readiness two, three or four years from now because of the indicators and the trends that I see today. Beating the trends, maintaining this readiness, cannot be done just with rhetoric, just with words. It takes money, too. So, one of my major functions in maintaining readiness is seeing that we get the proper budget allocations.

I don't want to disillusion you, but I have to tell you this: The secretary of defense has very little to do with the top line of the defense budget, the actual number. What he can do is determine how that top line is allocated to various accounts within the Defense Department.

I'll just give you two numbers that illustrate where my priorities are. In the '95 budget, which is the first budget I am fully responsible for, the operations and maintenance account increases by about 6 percent during the same year that our force structure decreases by about 7 percent. The other number is our depot maintenance account. It will grow by 20 percent, even as our weapon inventories shrink. This is a statement of my priorities on having highly effective, highly ready forces.

As we get to a smaller force, we must also emphasize maintaining the quality of our people. Today our men and women in uniform are terrific. They're smart, competent, dedicated and well trained. Everywhere I go, from the E Ring in the Pentagon to the DMZ [demilitarized zone] in Korea to the flight line at Aviano [Air Base, Italy], I am

deeply impressed with the pride and the enthusiasm of the service women and men who I am privileged to meet and work with. We will need those high quality people in the difficult, high-tech missions that we will be facing.

These people have volunteered to put their lives on the line to protect our security, and we owe them the highest quality of life possible. This means taking care of the people we have, and it also means when people are retiring and leaving the service, helping them make a smooth transition to civilian life.

Quality of life means support for military families who often endure unique stresses and hardships. And it means high quality, affordable child care and morale, welfare and recreation programs. Finally, it means maintaining top-notch health benefits and medical readiness.

That's a bundle of things to do, and they cost a lot of money. My pledge to you is that as we allocate resources in the defense budget, those items will have first priority.

Every penny that we spend to maintain military quality of life is an investment in the readiness of the force.

Streamlining DoD

Doing the drawdown right also means streamlining the Department of Defense. As many of you know, we plan to reduce the DoD civilian work force by 18 percent by the end of this decade, but there's a right way and a wrong way to do this streamlining.

We're going to do it right, and our approach has two different fronts. First, to the maximum extent possible, we will streamline without reductions in force by offering retraining, relocation and other incentives to our employees. Second, we'll make the best use of retirement incentives to balance our work force. The first legal, formal action that I took after I became the deputy secretary of defense more than a year ago was to authorize the enactment of the retirement benefit program which had been authorized by the Congress a year earlier and had been lying dormant.

Besides those features, we also have a responsibility to do everything we can to reduce the ob-

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stacles you face when you're doing your job. To do that, I and the managers who work for me have to delegate authority on down the line. We want decentralized decision making. We want to empower people to make more of the decisions. And we want to hold managers and employees accountable for their performance.

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We're going to be facing all of these challenges with fewer people. That means we need to put the best person — man or woman — in each job. Therefore, a crucial part of our policies is to expand women's roles and women's opportunities in defense.

Over the past year this department has made what I would consider historic changes to expand the roles, the challenges and the opportunities for women to serve and to excel in uniform. Women are now reporting aboard Navy combat ships and training and competing to fly in Air Force, Army and Navy combat units. You may have seen an article in the newspaper the other day about the first women going into combat positions on an aircraft carrier. The article was critical of the flights taking people out to see this. I am highly supportive of that mission. I think that was a marvelous thing for the secretary of the Navy to do, to highlight the significance and the importance of this development.

We're also encouraging women to compete for leadership positions. This is already happening. Women now command companies, ships, bases, even a strategic missile squadron. We have 37 women now among the senior defense officials here at the Pentagon, including Anita Jones, the director of defense research and engineering, a job that I held somewhat more than a decade ago.

In short, gender is no longer the

automatic barrier to full service in America's defense that it once was, and it shouldn't be. The glass ceiling doesn't just impede women's progress, it impedes military effectiveness.

Another way we're making sure we have the best person in each job is by promoting diversity. Defense has done very well in that and even led the nation to ensure equal opportunity and fight discrimination. We do have diversity in this department, but we have sacrificed nothing in the way of quality to get that diversity. Still, we're looking to do better. We've just put in place a new plan to expand opportunities in defense for minorities and for people with disabilities.

Protecting quality of life, expanding opportunities for women and ensuring diversity. These policies are not just the right thing to do, they are the smart thing to do.

They parallel one other key tool we have in managing our drawdown properly, which is overhauling the way we do business in defense. I'm not going to discuss this issue in any detail with this audience, but a major part of our defense budget each year goes to buying things. It's called defense acquisition.

System Overhaul

We have an archaic system, which costs us too much to buy the things we need. And in some cases it gets us inferior products. We have to overhaul that system from the ground up, and we are in the process of doing that. We have process-action teams in the Pentagon, as we speak, working to change regulations and remove constraints that keep program managers from doing the best job they can, and that keep the buyers in the Pentagon and in the services from having the freedom to buy the best.

I am convinced the problems in our defense acquisition system are not the people or the management.

We cannot cut costs simply by wishing to do so or simply by exhorting people to do better. In order to really cut costs in the system we have to change the system.

Given the complexity of the system, it is remarkably well run, but it requires expensive overhead. We cannot cut costs simply by wishing to do so or simply by exhorting people to do better. In order to really cut costs in the system we have to change the system.

This is what President [Bill] Clinton's effort to reinvent government is all about. Through the National Performance Review we have a mandate to "radically change the way the government operates — to shift from top-down bureaucracy to entrepreneurial government." So we're calling on

each of you to examine how we do business, and how we could do it better.

Your input has been invaluable, and last month Vice President [Al] Gore came to the Pentagon to honor our "reinvention heroes."

For example, the staff of the Air Force District of Washington dramatically streamlined and automated the way we process official travel expenses. They turned a 17-step process into four steps, and when this change is fully in place, it could save us \$1 billion over five years.

I am very serious about, and

deeply committed to, the president's challenge to reinvent government.

Changing the way we do business won't be easy. But the changes are crucial and within our reach. This department is full of very good, very smart people. You deserve the tools to do your best work. The American people deserve a government that works better and costs less. And you are the force for change.

I challenge you who have chosen this life and career of public service to live by one of John F. Kennedy's core beliefs — that one person can make a difference, and everyone should try. I deeply appreciate your service.

Thank you very much.

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 25, 1994

PLANS SET FOR PUBLIC SERVICE RECOGNITION WEEK

Secretary of Defense William J. Perry is scheduled to be the keynote speaker and host for a Public Service Recognition Week (PSRW) ceremony on Wednesday, May 4, at 2:00 p.m. in the Pentagon Auditorium, Room 5A1070. This ceremony kicks off a round of PSRW activities during the week of May 1-8, 1994.

The PSRW program is a time to pay special tribute to the dedication of public service employees and to recognize their contributions at all levels of government.

A major event of the week is the opening ceremony for PSRW exhibits on Thursday, May 5, at 12 noon. This will take place on the National Mall, 3rd and Independence Avenues, S. W., Washington, D. C. The Department of Defense will join approximately 60 other federal, state and local agencies in displaying the products and services they provide. Each of the military services and 12 Defense agencies will also provide exhibits ranging from high tech research and development items to tanks and helicopters.

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